

Negro National League

New York, N. Y.

February 20th, 1946

Minutes of regular meeting

A regular meeting of the Negro National League took place at the Hotel Theresa, in New York City on Wednesday afternoon at 3:30.

Those present were:

Baltimore Elites----Thos. T. Wilson; chairman presiding,  
Vernon Green  
Homestead Grays----S. H. Posey and Rufus Jackson  
New York Cubans----Alex Pompey  
New York Black Yankees----James Semler, William Leuschner  
and Curtis A. Leak, Act. Sec.  
Newark Eagles----Abraham & Effa Manley  
Philadelphia Stars----Edward Gottlieb  
Promoter for the NNL----Frank Forbes

Absent:

Homestead Grays----Cum Posey  
Phila Stars----Edward Bolden

The minutes of the previous meeting held in Chicago on December 12th were read and after a few minor corrections were approved unanimously. The minutes of the joint meeting held at the same time were also read and approved.

After a short debate it was decided to let Mr. Nunn of the Pittsburgh Courier sit in on the meeting but not as a newspaper man ~~him~~; in order not to conflict with the local newsmen who might feel hurt at not being extended the same privilege.

The treasurer made his report and stated that there was only a balance of \$255.47, which was insufficient to pay two outstanding bills: The expense of the president, \$333.00 and \$245.00 due to the secretary, both



presented itemized bills for collection. Edward gottlieb also presented a bill of \$19.09 for refreshments. These bills were ordered paid as soon as the treasury had the funds. A lengthy debate was held on how to eliminate the deficit from the treasury and finally Vernon Green moved that each club pay \$250 per month for five months and that 10% of the net from the East West Game would also be put into the treasury, which was seconded by Abraham Manley and carried. The monthly assessment for each club is to be paid by the 1st of May and on the first of each of the following four months or the money would be taken from the delinquent club from its first league game after the due date.

The president reported the results of his and Dr. Martin, president of the Negro American League, meeting with Commissioner Chandler and stated that the Commissioner said in effect that the leagues' old contracts were no good but the present ones were alright. That his personal opinion on the Jackie Robinson deal was that it would not go. He would be glad to help us and that he wanted to do something helpful for Negro Baseball. He said nothing against owners being officers of the league. He suggested that we get the lawyer of the National League to draw up a petition and present it to him and that it would be considered to have us recognized by organized baseball. He wanted to know what class we sought and Mr. Wilson told him that we were not major leaguers; but that we were better than the International League.



It was unanimously agreed to enforce the five year ban on all league players who jumped to Mexico. *or any other league except White League baseball*

In response to Mr. Semler's question of whether or not the clubs were going to pay extra salary to the players during spring training after all other expenses had been defrayed the clubs said no.

#### Election of Officers

Mr. Rufus Jackson nominated Mr. Samuel Battles, Commissioner of Correction in the City of New York, for president, which was seconded by Abraham Manley and carried. *No second necessary*

Edward Gottlieb nominated Thomas T. Wilson for president and this was seconded by Vernon Green, and carried. There were no further nominations for the presidency. The clubs voting for Thos. T. Wilson were four: N. Y. Black Yankees, N. Y. Cubans, Phila Stars and the Baltimore Elite Giants. The two clubs supporting Samuel Battles were the Homestead Grays and the Newark Eagles. Rufus Jackson desired to be placed on record as not voting after the presidential selection. Thus, Tho. T. Wilson was re-elected president. Alex Pompey was unopposed for vice president. Cum Posey was unopposed for secretary and so was A. Manley for treasurer. Curtis Leak was appointed ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ acting secretary.

Edward Gottlieb pointed out that much criticism had been directed at him on account of the Yankee's Stadium and his bookings of various teams and that if it would help the situation along any he would give up the Stadium to the Black Yankees and that it would please him if no one asked to be booked by him. And that in regards to three of four team double headers he would play on a home in home arrangement.



Dr. J. B. Martin, president of the Negro American League was a visitor and addressed the meeting: "He was glad to be able to attend. He said that his league expected trouble with their players jumping to the pacific coast; and that they could not stop players from going to Mexico because the could not pay the salaries the Mexicans were offering. He presented a grievance against the Homestead Grays for deducting \$90.00, which they had advanced Wyatt and Pennington and accused them of tampering. S. H. Posey firmly denied the tampering and told him that it was the custom for the league owners to take out monies like that where players were concerned and other league members assured him that it had been done before and the he should, in turn, take it back from the players.

Messrs Jackson and Semler pointed out to him that his league had broken the rules of the joint agreement on more than one occasion and that the NNL had always live up to it.

Mr. Semler pointed out to they had tampered with Felix McLaurin, who had been induced to play one game with the Birmingham Barons in mid-season. The other case was that of the Cincinnati Clowns permitting Philly Holmes to jump to them after they were trying to trade him to the Phila Stars. Sid Pollack had admitted tampering with Wells, which resulted into Wells being dissatisfied with his contract and had to be given more money. Dr. Martin said he would take up the respective cases at their league meeting Monday in Chicago. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p. M. on a motion duly made and seconded. Another session is to held on Thursday February 21st.



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The Second Day

The meeting commenced on the second day at 2:45 P. M.

The only absentee from the previous day was S. H. Posey.

The making of the league schedule was postponed until March, when the league would hold its next meeting.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried, the next meeting will be held in Baltimore on March 12th, Tuesday.

The constitution of the National League was adopted.

Dr. Martin, president of the Negro American League was granted the floor to give his report on his talk with Commissioner Chandler. In addition to what Thos. T. Wilson reported he said that the Commissioner informed him that the Negro Leagues needed their own parks in order to accomplish anything. He also pointed out that the statements that the commissioner was quoted as having given the newspapers were contrary to the ones he made in his meeting with Mr. Wilson and himself.

Dr. Martin said that 40% charges were too high to pay for Park rentals and that one of his specific reasons for attending the meeting was to have the Negro National League adopt a resolution forbidding its clubs from paying more than 25% for park rentals and that the Negro American League was going to adopt a similar one at its meeting on Monday.

In a motion made by Vernon Green and seconded by James

*with captions  
where they  
apply to us*



Semler and unanimously approved, that no teams of the Negro National and Negro American Leagues shall play in any parks where the rental fee is in excess of 25%. The penalty for violation of this rule shall be a fine of \$2,500 for each club and an indefinite suspension if not paid in fifteen days after the game is played. (Added to the above is the section in the "Joint Agreement " Re: to teams receiving 30% of the gross).

There was a long drawn out discussion on the entry of new members into the league. Messrs Gus Greenlee and John Shackelford were permitted into the meeting. Mr. Shackelford, president of the United States League was the spokesman and had this to say:

"That the United States League operated last year under somewhat a strain and that it intended to operate this year. He proposed that the United States League would dissolve and ask that two of the teams be accepted in the NNL with one of the teams representing Montreal and the other Brooklyn.. He said that either place had the proper playing facilities and that men holding the franchises were quite capable of carrying on financially and were prepared to meet any obligation that the NNL might impose upon them. The same proposal was going to be made to the Negro American League and that he thought that there was a strong possibility of a team operating out of Briggs stadium in Detroit or that a few games might be played there. However, if that park was not available there was another park in the city, which had an uncovered grandstand and that lights would be installed. That the other franchise would be Cincinnati providing Mr. Pollack would permit it.



If the teams were accepted it would be healthy for baseball and particularly Negro baseball and wanted to know if there were any questions to be asked of him."

In response to Edward Gottlieb's query what would happen if the NNL accepted two teams and the NAL none? He said that the USL comprised six teams and if four teams were not taken the deal was off.

He said that the Brooklyn franchise would be owned by Mr. Branch Rickey and if he didn't want it Mr. Elwood Parsons of Dayton, Ohio would take it. Gus Greenlea would own the Montreal franchise and that Allen Johnson would have one that he (Shackleford) would have Detroit. Those were his answers as to who would own the various clubs.

They were willing to pay the \$2,500 fee for franchises.

The two gentlemen left the room and a long discussion ensued; with the conclusion being drawn that the league members individually felt that they morally wanted to do something for Gus Greenlea ~~and that legally they were not obligated to him or anyone else.~~

It was finally decided to ask them to pay their full franchise prices of \$2,500 each before the league would vote to accept or reject them. That this money be posted immediately and before Monday before the meeting of the Negro American League, so that the action we took would not be dependent upon the action taken by the other league.

Greenlea and Shackleford were brought back to ascertain who would really own the Brooklyn franchise. They were vague and could not state one specific owner. The league decided that all owners had to be acceptable to the NNL.

Recess at 7:30



Reconvened at 9:00 P. M.

The next meeting is to be held in Baltimore on Tuesday March 12th.

The season is to commence on Saturday May 4th.

The applications from Gus Greenlee and Shackelford are to be tabled until the next meeting.

Dr. Rueben Jackson, president of the Negro Southern League was guest. He came with a working agreement from his league (which is to be placed on file) and after hearing it a motion to accept it was duly seconded and carried to have The president to sign it. He expressed appreciation for the splendid cooperation of the league. He was, however, cautioned that no violations of this agreement by John Harden would be permitted.

It was dedided to petition organized baseball for recognition.

Action on the western clubs coming east was tabled until the next meeting.

\$70.00 was collected for Jock waters, who is ill.

Applications from at least twelve umpires for jobs were received. It was dedided to hire two for 1946.

On a motion made by E. Gottlieb that forty games be played in each half of the league's schedule if there are six teams and forty-two games if there are eight teams. It was seconded by A. Manley and carried.

The secretary was instructed to invite Art Carter to the next meeting to discuss the possibility of a public relations set up.

On motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 10:15.